



## H.R. 3432 – 200th Anniversary Commemoration Commission of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Act of 2007

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### FLOOR SITUATION

H.R. 3432 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Donald Payne (D-NJ) on August 3, 2007. The bill was passed in the House under suspension of the rules on October 2, 2007. The Senate passed the bill with an amendment on December 19, 2007 by unanimous consent.

H.R. 3432 is expected to be considered on the floor on January 22, 2008.

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### BACKGROUND

This year marks the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the enactment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Act, which was signed into law by President Thomas Jefferson in 1807. This legislation prohibited the importation of slaves into the United States or its territories beginning January 1, 1808. An additional law was enacted in 1820 that made the transatlantic slave trade an act of piracy.

During the transatlantic slave trade more than 12 million Africans were transported in bondage from Africa to the Americas.

The 13<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution, ratified by the states in 1865, formally abolished slavery in the United States.

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### SUMMARY

#### New provisions included in the Senate amendment

The Senate-passed version of the bill included an amendment striking the provision authorizing “such sums as may be necessary” for the commission.

#### Provisions contained in both the House and Senate-passed versions of the bill

H.R. 3432 establishes the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration Commission of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The Commission will coordinate and assist with programs across the country in observance of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The Commission will consist of nine members appointed by Congress - four appointed by the Speaker of the House, three by the majority leader of the Senate, one by the House Minority Leader, and one by the Senate Minority Leader - and is required to submit a final report of its activities and accounting by December 31, 2009.

Additionally, the legislation will encourage State and local governments, as well as other organizations, to organize and participate in anniversary activities to expand the understanding of the significance of the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of slavery as it relates to the United States.

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### COST

The bill has not been scored by the Congressional Budget Office.

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### STAFF CONTACT

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